

The ABI Waiver II being presented to you for a vote today is touted by those bringing it forward as a change for the good of the Program. The rhetoric used by DSS is that this change will allow more people to participate on the program with no increase in cost. For them, that cost is only a matter of the dollars, not the true effect it will have on the people that these funds are intended to support. The secondary benefit DSS hopes to achieve is to make it easier for them to administer the program, again putting their needs ahead of those that need this program to survive. They wish to shrink the number of organization and people they need to work with to ease administration of the program, and have enlisted the support of the major nonprofit organization that will survive and gain from this Waiver II. To help sell the idea, DSS has worked only with these major nonprofit organization to push this forward, knowing those nonprofits would use their group of lobbyist to get to you and sell the idea. These big groups are glad to support the new Waiver II, as it allows them to keep their share of the money, and for the large service providers, even increase their share of the money as the private providers and smaller provider groups get pushed out. Don't let the word nonprofit fool you, greater control through less competition will ensure their part of the funds grow and the hefty salaries for those in control can continue. Again, none of this is about the concerns of the people that need this program.

The truth is that this new Waiver II in no way helps the quality of the support for those that use the ABI Waiver services, and over time will erode those services for current participants until they are all forced into the prison like services provided by some of these large service providers or end up in nursing homes or mental institutions.

You see today in this room a large contingent of people that passionately support the friends and loved ones that depend on the current services of the ABI Waiver Program. We are not completely happy with the current program, but have learned to live with it, and do not wish to go to this new "dumbed down" Waiver II program that in no way will improve the quality of the participants lives, but will over time destroy any chance for them for a better life. We are not just some corporate sponsored "Tea Party" group trying to push forth an agenda. We are the people that live this nightmare every day, and we will continue to fight for our people. You can either be with us or against us, there is no middle ground.

For those that support us, we will fight passionately for your re-election, as this is the only means for the survival of our people. For those that vote for this new waiver two, we will fight with every ounce of our strength to ensure you do not get re-elected, because we will see you as trying to make our nightmare worse.

We implore you to vote **"No"** for Waiver II. Please take the side of the people that truly need this current program, and not the side of the political machines that wish to drive a result that ensures their continued power and wealth. The participants, friends and loved ones will be glad to work with you to create meaningful changes that can stay within the available funding but create real improvements for our friends and loved ones that desperately need this program.

Christine & Randall Warren
Loved ones for our TBI survivor daughter Anna-Marie Cirillo